

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

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1. An image recording and/or reproducing method adapted to a system comprising a plurality of image processing apparatuses which have functions of recording and/or reproducing image data and are  
10 coupled via one or a plurality of networks, comprising:

transmitting an instruction from a first image processing apparatus with respect to a second image processing apparatus by an electronic mail; and  
15 returning a status report related to the second image processing apparatus to the first image processing apparatus by an electronic mail, in response to the instruction received by the electronic mail.

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2. The image recording and/or reproducing method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

continuing recording or reproduction by linking operation with an image processing apparatus which is other than the second image processing apparatus and is coupled to said one or plurality of networks,  
25 depending on a state of the second image processing apparatus.

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3. The image recording and/or reproducing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

the instruction included in the electronic mail includes one of a record instruction, a reproduce instruction and a status request;

5 the record instruction includes an apparatus name of the second image processing apparatus, a specified recording material, a start time and an end time;

10 the reproduce instruction includes an apparatus name of the second image processing apparatus, a specified reproducing material, a start time and an end time; and

15 the status request includes an operating state of the second image processing apparatus, a vacant memory capacity within the second image processing apparatus, and a list of reproducible contents,

said operating state of the second image processing apparatus including a recording state, a reproducing state and a standby state.

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4. The image recording and/or reproducing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first  
25 image processing apparatus functions as a master apparatus, and one or a plurality of image processing apparatuses coupled to a network to which the first image processing apparatus is coupled function as slave apparatuses.

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5. An image recording and/or reproducing  
35 method adapted to a system comprising a plurality of image processing apparatuses which have functions of recording and/or reproducing image data and are

coupled via one or a plurality of networks,  
comprising:

transmitting an instruction from a first image  
processing apparatus with respect to a second image  
5 processing apparatus;

returning a status report related to the second  
image processing apparatus to the first image  
processing apparatus, in response to the received  
instruction; and

10 continuing recording or reproduction by linking  
operation with an image processing apparatus which  
is other than the second image processing apparatus  
and is coupled to said one or plurality of networks,  
depending on a state of the second image processing  
15 apparatus.

20 6. An image processing apparatus  
connectable to a network and having functions of  
recording and/or reproducing image data, comprising:

a unit to transmit an instruction with respect  
to a receiving end image processing apparatus via  
25 the network by an electronic mail; and

a unit to return a status report to a  
transmitting end image processing apparatus via the  
network by an electronic mail, in response to the  
instruction of the electronic mail which is received  
30 via the network.

35 7. The image processing apparatus as  
claimed in claim 6, further comprising:

a unit to continue recording or reproduction by

linking operation with one or a plurality of other image processing apparatuses which are coupled to the network, depending on a state of the image processing apparatus.

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8. The image processing apparatus as  
10 claimed in claim 6, wherein:

the instruction included in the electronic mail includes one of a record instruction, a reproduce instruction and a status request;

the record instruction includes an apparatus  
15 name of the receiving end image processing apparatus, a specified recording material, a start time and an end time;

the reproduce instruction includes an apparatus  
name of the receiving end image processing apparatus,  
20 a specified reproducing material, a start time and an end time; and

the status request includes an operating state of the receiving end image processing apparatus, a vacant memory capacity within the receiving end  
25 image processing apparatus, and a list of reproducible contents,

said operating state of the receiving end image processing apparatus including a recording state, a reproducing state and a standby state.

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9. An image processing apparatus  
35 connectable to a network and having functions of recording and/or reproducing image data, comprising:  
a unit to transmit an instruction with respect

to a receiving end image processing apparatus via the network, when said image processing apparatus operates as a transmitting end;

5 a unit to return a status report to a transmitting end image processing apparatus via the network, in response to the instruction which is received via the network, when said image processing apparatus operates as a receiving end; and

10 a unit to continue recording or reproduction by linking operation with an image processing apparatus which is coupled to the network and is other than the receiving end image processing apparatus, depending on a state of said image processing apparatus when said image processing apparatus  
15 operates as the receiving end.

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